

After Action Report



Project “In the Park”

**Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services
Veterinary Public Health**



After Action Report

Authored By:

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Project Partners

The Houston Kennel Club, other local kennel clubs, Harris County Precinct Two Parks, and HCPHES VPH

Project Donors

The Houston Kennel Club, other local kennel clubs, Harris County Precinct Two Parks, Citizens for Animal Protection, Office Depot Inc., Home Depot Inc., and HCPHES VPH

Project Name

“In the Park”

Project Completion Date

05/16/09

Project Purpose

The project purpose was to reduce intentional and unintentional free roaming dogs in zip codes 77093 and 77039 through provision of a free dog training program

Purpose Impact

1. 27 dog owners requested dog training
2. 60 percent of dog owners who requested dog training, did not have a current rabies vaccination for their dogs, but obtained a rabies vaccination from the HCPHES VPH shelter and returned to participate in the training;
3. 73 percent of participants resided in the target area of Aldine (zip codes 77093 and 77039);
4. 9 percent of dogs were too young to be vaccinated against rabies, yet these dog owners were counseled on dog vaccination regimes and the inherent risks of taking young unvaccinated puppies to public parks;
5. Approximately 20 percent of participating dogs were led into the event (and leash manners class) on a dog chain;
6. 100 percent of all dogs (registered or not) were instructed on dog feces collection and provided with a feces collection bag to place in their pocket for use if required;
7. 87 percent of participating dogs were mixed breed dogs;
8. Pet owners in the Aldine community were exposed to the Houston Kennel Club and other area kennel clubs' training techniques and passion for well maintained and mannered pets;
9. The Houston Kennel Club (and other local area kennel clubs), Harris County Precinct Two Parks, Office Depot Inc., Home Depot Inc., Citizens for Animal Protection and HCPHES VPH successfully coordinated and partnered on a community outreach event; and
10. The event was set up to handle at least 150 dogs, utilizing 2 Animal Control Officers, 3 HCPHES VPH educational staff, and at least 6 kennel club volunteers at any given time throughout the day.

11. 18 percent of the anticipated number of community members took advantage of the free dog training day. Although the number of participants was lower than the anticipated volume, the event gave the “In the Park” collaborators the opportunity to assess project flow, likely audience triggers, and marketing focus for future “In the Park” events.

Short Term Goal

The project's short term goal was to educate residents and adjacent communities on responsible dog ownership



Short Term Impact

1. 150 community door-to-door discussions regarding dog training and vaccination by HCPHES VPH education staff;
2. 1,500 bi-lingual door hangers were distributed throughout target area;
3. Over 500 community flyers were distributed through community centers, 12 local businesses, Harris County Hospital District, Harris County Precinct Two Parks, HCPHES Veterinary Public Health, and East Aldine Management District.
4. 1 local newspaper (The Northeast News) carried an article concerning the “In the Park” free dog training day;
5. 18 dog owners and their dogs received in depth dog training on collar fitting, leash manners, and basic obedience commands from local area kennel club dog trainers;
6. The “In the Park” free dog training event appeared to be utilized by pet owners who possess a love and concern for their dogs, yet did not have the financial resources to attend private dog training classes;
7. All event participants received dog training DVDs, grooming tools, Frisbees, “Off the Chain” leashes, pencils and posters, and educational materials;
8. The majority of participants requested future dog training opportunities;



9. Located in the target area, the Precinct Two Park proved to be an excellent dog training facility. It was immaculately clean and had adequate covered areas, water, parking, perimeter fencing, bathroom facilities, and was within close proximity to the HCPHES VPH animal shelter.
10. The members of the participating kennel clubs are unanimous in supporting additional events of this nature. In fact, two clubs in the region are planning to approach their local animal control organizations to begin similar community outreach programs.

Long Term Goal

The project's long term goal is to encourage, support and rehabilitate a community's intolerance for free roaming and mishandled dogs and reduce the number of bite incidents within zip codes 77093 and 77039.



Long-term impact will be measured and tracked in combination with other HCPHES VPH P.E.T. project intervention events and activities. The culture and treatment toward dogs is deeply ingrained in this community. However, the first step toward changing a community's culture and belief system is to garner acceptance and trust. It is the "In the Park" collaborators' belief that this community will begin to trust and utilize future dog training events through word of mouth and successful dog training venues.

Project Summary

The Houston Kennel Club, other area kennel clubs, Harris County Precinct Two Parks, Citizens for Animal Protection, Office Depot Inc., Home Depot Inc., and HCPHES VPH, in direct response to the public safety concerns concerning free roaming dogs, executed a day in the park of free dog training activities within the targeted zip codes of 77039 and 77093.

As part of HCPHES VPH's overall P.E.T. project (**Protect, Educate, Train**, a community intervention program), a day of free dog training called "In the Park" was scheduled and executed. The P.E.T. project provides three phases of a) Intensive Education, b) Intensive Services, and c) Intensive Animal Control Enforcement to a specific targeted area. The "In

the Park” event complimented and supported the intensive services portion of the P.E.T. project in zip codes 77093 and 77039.

The event was open to the public and all breeds of dogs. Event marketing was strictly limited to the boundaries of zip codes 77093 and 77039. The event was held at James Driver Park, a Harris County Precinct Two facility located at the corner of Highway 59/East Little York, and is within the target area.

In particular, it was noted that event participants presented relatively healthy and human friendly dogs for class registration. Owners and participants were eager to learn about dog training, and lived within close proximity to the event.

Materials developed and distributed directly for the “In the Park” event:

- Bi-lingual door hangers
- Event flyers
- Bi-Lingual event signage (education messaging on staked signs regarding petting strange dogs, keeping dogs on leashes, rabies vaccinations, and dog feces collection).



Staked Signs throughout the Park



Rejoicing for Responsible Dog Ownership



In accordance with the celebration of responsible dog ownership, collaborators ensured that each resident was greeted with joy and thanks for being a responsible pet owner. Dog owner's questions were answered, basic dog maintenance and safety protocols were introduced, and dog training on the topics of collar use and fitting, leash manners and basic dog commands were offered.

Hot Wash Report:

Upon close of the "In the Park" event, HCPHES VPH chaired a "hot wash" (after incident meeting) to quickly ascertain what worked well and what could be improved upon.

<u>Room for Improvement</u>	<u>Worked Well (Sustain)</u>	<u>Quick Fixes</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate use of stations • Provide handouts that reinforce training topics/audience questions • Provide feedback and continuity to the Aldine community • Add audience specific and effective marketing • Make sure community understands what a rabies certificate looks like and that the actual certificate is required to participate • Provide additional Spanish speaking trainers and translators • Offer free leashes to participants before the class • Provide free flea products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of registered dog owners through use of orange arm bands • Mandating all participating dog have proof of current rabies vaccination • Providing low cost rabies vaccination within close proximity to the event • Providing free supplies such as leashes, training DVD's, and grooming tools • Utilizing Animal Control Officers to assist with safety/crowd control • Providing dog feces bags and instructions to all dog owners • Access to current veterinary clinic information for rabies verification check in the event the participants brought the wrong certificate • Utilizing bi-lingual messaging in all materials to reach Spanish speaking residents • Partnership between Houston Kennel club, other area clubs, Precinct Two Parks, Citizens for Animal Protection, and HCPHES VPH • Park facility and location • Proximity to wholesome and reasonably priced lunch for volunteers • The Houston and other area kennel club volunteers demonstrated their concern and care of all dogs/dog owners, regardless of breed, pedigree, or location. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team dog owners with individual trainer for all training topics • Develop handouts on flea control, use and types of dog collars, and training techniques • Develop web page with photos and event stories • Develop dog training schedules future events • Develop pet owner newsletter • Create flyers with emphasis on rabies vaccinations • Schedule dog training in conjunction with a HCPHES VPH rabies vaccination day • Utilize Spanish speaking apprentice trainers from the community • Give participants their "give aways" upon arrival • Solicit donations for flea treatments • Mandate no bicycles or skate boards in training areas • Rope off training areas • Pre-package giveaways • Utilize 1 gallon bleach/milk containers for cheap and disposable poop scoopers • Give participants dog training certificates/ribbons • Obtain participants email address for future email newsletters • Utilize HCPHES database for targeted marketing

Conclusion:

Thanks to the kind generosity of the Houston Kennel Club, other area kennel clubs, Harris County Precinct Two Parks, Citizens for Animal Protection, Office Depot Inc., Home Depot Inc., and HCPHES VPH, the **first community targeted dog training event** was scheduled and executed. The community appeared grateful for the attention and concern given to the relationship they have with their dogs, and the dog's overall health and well being.

Collaborators agreed that the "In the Park" dog training event was valuable to the Aldine community. They also believed that the dog training concept would increase in popularity over time and should be continued on a regular bi-annual basis (spring and autumn).

